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polishing of the next wafer after the wafer being tested. Wafers which do not meet specification are placed in a reject FOUP or portal 642 for proper disposal. Wafers meeting specifications will be placed in an out-portal or FOUP 644 for subsequent processing, packaging and shipping.

5 Fourth module 600, in one embodiment, has a width 650 of about 14 feet 0 inches and a length 660 of about 16 feet 0 inches. In another embodiment, fourth module 600 has a footprint ranging between about one hundred (100) square feet (sqft) and about one hundred and eighty (180) square feet. Again, as with all prior modules, the exact size may vary within the scope of the present invention. In one embodiment, fourth module 600 processes about thirty (30) wafers per hour. In another embodiment, fourth module 600 is adapted to process between about twenty-nine (29) and about thirty-three (33) 300mm wafers per hour.

10 In one embodiment, the four modules 300, 400, 500 and 600, or their alternative embodiments, and ancillary equipment take up about 4,000 square feet or less of a production facility. This total footprint is much smaller than required for prior art equipment performing similar processes. As a result, apparatus, systems and methods of the present invention may be incorporated more readily in smaller facilities, or as part of a device fabrication facility in which circuit devices are formed. In this manner, the time and cost of packing and shipping, as well as unpacking and inspecting, are avoided. The costs of packing and shipping can, for example, save on the order of about two (2) percent or more of the total wafer processing costs. Additional details on exemplary in-fab wafer processing methods are discussed in U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/808,749 (Attorney Docket No. 20468-000310), entitled "Cluster Tool Systems and Methods for In Fab Wafer Processing," filed contemporaneously herewith, the complete disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference.

25 The invention has now been described in detail for purposes of clarity and understanding. However, it will be appreciated that certain changes and modifications may be practiced within the scope of the appended claims. For example, the modules may have different layouts, dimensions and footprints than as described above. Additionally, transfer devices that have been described as traveling or fixed, may also be fixed or traveling, respectively.